

## 96 TW/CC Civilian Call – Sequestration Impacts

Update 21 Jun 13

### Questions & Answers

1. ***Is this a one-time good deal or are we going to face a furlough again next year?*** (OPR: FOG) Answer: Sequestration is a 10-year process and could include furlough; no one knows for certain. Each year has automatic sequestration reductions built in. Part of the difficulty we are experiencing this year is we were asked to take this cut well into the fiscal year instead of having time to plan for the cut. If there is a silver lining, it's that we would have more time to plan for the out years. But the bottom line is unless the law is altered, both sequestration and the possibility of furlough exist.

2. ***Have we considered shutting the base down for 22 consecutive days as a means of energy conservation?*** (OPR: FOG) Answer: Yes, we absolutely considered it. However, we had to look at the consequences of that. For example, we support the Northwest Florida Airport and have to continue to do that. We have patients at the hospital who don't get sick on a schedule. If we shut the air conditioning off for that period, there would be greater health concerns for our people when they return. So while we may save on energy in the short term, the long-term consequences are greater. Although nothing is off the table in terms of what we have decided, when we did look at that alternative early in the process it wasn't practical and definitely harder to do. We will find the best answer. Update: 28 Mar 13, OSD reduced the number of furlough days to 14. Update: 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11.)

3. ***Will we have options (personal options), on how this is implemented? How much flex is in the options?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Yes. You will have an opportunity to communicate with your immediate supervisor and provide anything relevant to your personal situation. Ultimately your supervisor and commander, up through the group commander, is going to have to look at that and mission considerations to achieve the best alternative. There is no one size fits all, often it will be based on the services provided.

4. ***Would Congress allow us to reprogram dollars to offset the need to furlough?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: No. We are unsure what authority will be given to reprogram dollars so that is difficult to answer as we would be speculating. But there could be some mitigation. But we don't anticipate the continuing resolution will make the furlough go away. Update: 28 Mar 13, OSD reduced the number of furlough days to 14. Update: 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11.)

5. ***Is one of the consequences of sequestration the loss of civilian positions in the future?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Not sure we can tie the future loss of any civilian positions directly to sequestration. We absorbed a number of losses as a result of other reprogramming and have made some management reassignments to adjust for that so that may be some of what you are seeing now.

6. ***How will furlough affect sick and annual leave?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: When you reach 80 hours of non-pay status in a leave year, you will not earn annual or sick leave for that pay period. The "clock" re-starts and you begin earning sick and annual leave again until you

reach another 80 hours of non-pay status. Recommend you check the Air Force Portal Home Page and review the Sequestration Information & FAQs at: <https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af/USAF/ep/globalTab.do?channelPageId=s6925EC1356510FB5E044080020E329A9> which contains frequently asked questions. **Update:** The response to this question remains the same. However, as of 22 May 2013 the Civilian Admin Furlough Q & A has been updated. The latest update can be viewed on myPers at: [https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/15227/p/1,2](https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/15227/p/1,2). [See, Q31, Administrative Furlough Frequently Asked Questions.]

7. ***When can we expect more specific guidance?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The process will start when you receive your proposal notice and discuss your preferences with your immediate supervisor.

8. ***In a week if the government shuts down how will that affect us?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: It would be speculative to answer that; we'll have to cross that bridge when that happens. Update: On 26 Mar 13, the President signed a continuing appropriations bill that will keep the government running for the remainder of the fiscal year.

9. ***Are contracts not affected?*** (OPR: AFTC/PZ). Answer: Contracts and contractor employees will be affected. There may be a number of things that happen to contracts including cancellation, modification (schedules stretched, services rendered amended, options not exercised), etc. Contracts and contractors will feel the affect of sequestration.

10. ***Is the leadership not concerned about the "brain-drain," the fact that our best and brightest will fold their tents and go work outside of government?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: There is great concern about our dedicated and talented employees leaving federal service as a consequence of this action. However, these are the cards we were dealt and we must make the best of it.

11. ***How does furlough affect TSP withholdings? Is there any guidance to tell people specific things they should be doing or at least suggestions?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: It's a personal decision based on your individual financial situation. There are two resources that will help you make an informed decision. Visit the website <http://www.afmc.af.mil/sequestration.asp> and review the frequently asked questions on the topic and the Thrift Board has published a fact sheet addressing questions regarding TSP contributions if employees are furloughed as a result of sequestration. It also details alternatives for accessing your TSP funds should you face financial hardship. The fact sheet can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.tsp.gov/PDF/formspubs/oc13-7.pdf>.

12. ***When will we know our work schedule and hours?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Between now and when the furlough decision notices are issued. We have to follow the AFMC/AFGE MOA for bargaining unit employees (BUEs) and all the guidance provided by HQ Air Force. The process begins with your proposed notice of furlough and discussions between you, your supervisor, and your chain of command.

13. ***Is civilian tuition assistance affected?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Locally there is no programming for civilian tuition assistance (TA). All TA for centrally managed courses is funded and managed by AFPC. We have not heard anything about that ending. TA for the acquisition workforce has also been suspended. This is the message we received "At this time, all ACQ Civilian TA applications submitted prior to 12 Mar 13 will be reviewed for approval. Any applications submitted on or after 12 Mar 13 will remain in pending status until further direction

is received." This information is posted on the AFVEC (Air Force Virtual Education) site.

14. ***Is VERA/VSIP going to be offered?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: No. Administrative furlough is a temporary non-pay action. VERA/VSIP is permanent, leading to employee separations from federal service. VERA/VSIP is offered in two situations: as a pre-Reduction-in-Force measure, and to facilitate workforce shaping action. Furlough does not meet either of these criteria.

15. ***Are we eligible for unemployment compensation?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Each state has different rules for unemployment compensation. We refer you to the State of Florida's Reemployment Assistance Program website which describes their process with FAQs to include eligibility criteria - <http://floridajobs.org/office-directory/division-of-workforce-services/reemployment-assistance-programs>

16. ***Will you advise employees that taking a loan against their TSP is not a good idea?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: It's a personal decision based on your individual financial situation. There are two resources that will help you make an informed decision. Visit the website <http://www.afmc.af.mil/sequestration.asp> and review the frequently asked questions on the topic and the Thrift Board has published a fact sheet addressing questions regarding TSP contributions if employees are furloughed as a result of sequestration. It also details alternatives for accessing your TSP funds should you face financial hardship. The fact sheet can be accessed at the following link: <https://www.tsp.gov/PDF/formspubs/oc13-7.pdf>.

17. ***In terms of child care, is the CDC going to close for one day? Should we be looking for alternative care?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: We do not know the complete impacts of sequestration. We will share information as it become available. **Update:** On 28 Mar 13 we received approval from OSD to except some CDC employees from the furlough.

18. ***Some work comes from project funds, test projects and such; how will that affect employees? Are we going to lose our jobs?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: We will have to adjust to that as it happens. We do not anticipate that anyone will lose their jobs as a result of the 2013 fiscal challenges.

19. ***Will I get a hard copy of the proposal notice?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Yes. For those employees not available for face-to-face delivery (e.g., TDY, leave), we do have the option to e-mail, fax, or use official mail. However, the intent is for your supervisor to hand the proposal notice to you.

20. ***Please address the potential for there to be a rift between GS employees and contractors as the furlough unfolds*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: With open and honest communication we are going to get through this together and not be at odds with each other. We have worked many other issues successfully in the past and will approach this the same way.

21. ***Can the requirement for off duty employment approval be waived for the furlough or at least the process expedited if it takes too long?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Yes. AFMCI 51-201 requires two weeks' notice "except in cases where a two-week notice is not possible." This administrative furlough meets that exception. Off-duty employment information is available on the Eglin Civilian Personnel SharePoint site: <https://org.eis.afmc.af.mil/sites/96abw/96msg/96fss/96FSM/civilianpersonnel/FSMCE%20Employee%20Relations/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

22. ***Is there a plan to shut down the medical clinics on Fridays?*** (OPR: MDG). Answer: There is no plan to do that. We have to follow the AFMC/AFGE MOA for bargaining unit employees (BUEs) and all the guidance provided by HQ Air Force. The process begins with your proposed notice of furlough and discussions between you, your supervisor, and your chain of command.

23. ***Should we not be writing our congressmen about allowing this to happen?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: We are here to support the government and execute the direction given to us in our capacity as public servants. If you have a personal interest in expressing your feelings about the furlough to your representatives as private citizens then yes you have that option in that capacity.

24. ***Shouldn't supervisors be given training on how to handle this; I haven't seen or heard anything? Who is going to educate my supervisor to make these decisions?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: It's up to leadership to convey the rules, laws, and trade-offs, and we will do that. The Eglin Civilian Personnel Section (96 FSS/FSMC) is available to answer questions from supervisors and employees.

25. ***Aren't firefighters, who are on an uncommon tour of duty taking a higher pay cut, to the tune of 28%? Is there something that can be done about that?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Commanders and supervisors will work with employees to develop implementation plans and scheduling for their respective units, balancing the mission requirements and employee concerns. Specific guidance regarding how to schedule employees who are on an uncommon tour of duty can be found at the Office of Personnel Management's (OPM) website: <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/guidance-for-administrative-furloughs.pdf>. **Update:** The AFMC/AFGE MOA for firefighters, dated 31 May 13 addresses how furlough time is to be applied for firefighters. The MOA can be viewed at Eglin Civilian Personnel SharePoint site: <https://org.eis.afmc.af.mil/sites/96abw/96msg/96fss/96FSM/civilianpersonnel/FSMCE%20Employee%20Relations/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

26. ***Patient education about the negative impact on care, particularly for the elderly, who often don't have access to computers, is lacking. How are we going to notify patients about the shortfalls (longer wait times), who is responsible to communicate that and when are we going to start? Recommend we have some kind of script for the hospital so people are given the same message.*** (OPR: MDG). Answer: Once the individual duty section furlough schedules have been determined, the 96th Medical Group will assess the impact on patient care services and then notify staff and patients of the impact. As a scripted statement for public release, "With few exceptions, the 96th Medical Group is subject to Sequestration and the Civilian Furlough. As a result, there will be a reduction in appointments and longer wait times for outpatient services. We appreciate your patience as we do our best to provide high quality, safe care to all beneficiaries." The 96th Public Affairs Office will be asked to assist in helping to communicate this message through all available means possible.

27. ***How many days will employees have to reply?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Employees will have 7 calendar days after the proposal notice to reply.

28. ***Since our electrical bill is so high, why not shut the base down for a day?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: We considered that, along with closing for 22 consecutive days. However as I replied to an earlier question about the 22 consecutive days, we had to look at the consequences of that. For example, we support the Northwest Florida Airport and have to continue to do that. We have patients at the hospital who don't get sick on a schedule. Again,

nothing is yet off the table in terms of what we have decided, but we are trying to flex to the maximum extent possible to balance mission needs with that of the needs of our workforce. Update: 28 Mar 13, OSD reduced the number of furlough days to 14. **Update:** 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11.)

**29. What if we pre-purchased airline tickets; how is that going to work with leave and furlough days?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Employees are not prohibited from taking leave during the furlough period. If the requested leave period includes a furlough day(s), the furlough day takes precedence and the employee is not paid for that time. Commanders and supervisors will work with employees to balance leave requests and mission requirements during the furlough period, as they do throughout the year.

**30. Are Alternate Work Schedule (AWS) and Physical Fitness (PT) going to be cut and are we all going back to eight- hour shifts? Why not leave it up to the supervisors?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The AFMC/AFGE MOA allows flexibility to construct a work schedule that works to balance mission requirements and the desires of the employee which may include AWS and PT. Changes to AWS must comply with the Furlough MOA for bargaining-unit employees. While employees will have input in scheduling decisions, unit cohesion and the impact to other activities that your unit may support will also come into play.

**31. How will our response to the proposal affect how the union represents us?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: There will be no affect. Management is committed to working with the local unions and complying with the AFMC/AFGE MOA.

**32. Can we split our shop to have half work on Monday, and half on Friday?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Maybe. Each unit—from shop level to Group, will balance the preferences of the employees with the mission requirements and comply with the AFMC/AFGE Furlough MOA to effect scheduling decisions. While employees will have input in scheduling decisions, unit cohesion and the impact to other activities that your unit may support will also come into play.

**33. How will sequestration affect time off awards (TOA), monetary awards and QSI as appraisal time approaches?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: It will impact monetary awards and QSIs based on higher headquarter guidance. We are still pending receipt of guidance regarding TOAs.

**34. Are we allowed to travel on furlough days?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: An employee may be reimbursed for travel if returning from TDY on a furlough day, but will not receive per diem. In general, however, travel should occur during duty status days. **Update:** The response to this question remains the same. However, as of 22 May 2013 the Civilian Admin Furlough Q & A has been updated. The latest update can be viewed on myPers at: [https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/15227/p/1,2](https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/15227/p/1,2). [See, Q27, Administrative Furlough Frequently Asked Questions.]

**35. Is the MOA available on line, can you give us a short summary of what's in it?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: It was immediately posted on the AFGE Council 214 website. Although it's only 6 pages, it takes some time to study and we recommend everyone review the document themselves. Questions may be addressed to your supervisor or your union representative. The MOA be accessed on the Team Eglin website at: <http://www.eglin.af.mil/under Furlough Update> and the Eglin Civilian Personnel Section (96 FSS/FSMC) SharePoint website at: <https://org.eis.afmc.af.mil/sites/96abw/96msg/96fss/96FSM/civilianpersonnel/FSMCE%20Employee%20Relations/Forms/AllItems.aspx>



36. ***Shouldn't our expectations and priorities change, it's not realistic to think we can have the same output with this reduction?*** (OPR: XP). Answer: Yes, we will be constrained by the impacts of the furlough and won't be able to execute in the same way. Things will not happen as fast for example. So there will be some expectation management in terms of what we can provide.

37. ***Are we going to a four-day test mission cycle? And how does that impact contractors?*** (OPR: OG). Answer: We may, but nothing has been decided yet. Constraints due to sequestration (non-pay budget reductions) may drive the 96 TW to reduced test days. A current proposal seeks to synchronize activities to support flight testing on only 4 work days. During this time, ground testing may still continue 5 days a week, if required resources are available. Our goal is to synchronize across the TW, as best we can, to minimize impact to our total workforce while maximizing our throughput.

38. ***How come DoD chose to furlough 22 days when for example the IRS is only doing four days?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: I can only speak to DoD guidance and the direction we have been given. DoD is addressing higher sequestration cuts than other agencies. DoD cuts are more than half of the total sequestration reductions. It is not known why OSD made the decision to furlough versus deeper cuts in other areas. Update: On 26 Mar 13, the President signed a continuing appropriations bill that will keep the government running for the remainder of the fiscal year. In addition it provided for \$10B additional funding for DoD. On 28 Mar 13, OSD reduced the number of furlough days to 14. **Update:** 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11.)

39. ***Is the local community aware of the impact?*** (OPR: PA). Answer: Yes, as a matter of fact I just concluded a television interview with Channel 3 and the Northwest Florida Daily News and we invited our honorary commanders, many of whom have and will attend one session today so they can understand the impact. We will be doing more community outreach as sequestration progresses. But yes, the community is aware there will be an impact.

40. ***Does each MAJCOM reach a separate agreement?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The AFMC/AFGE C214 Furlough MOA covers all bargaining unit employees (BUEs) serviced by the Eglin Civilian Personnel Section (96 FSS/FSMC), regardless of MAJCOM affiliation.

41. ***Are we still full time employees during the furlough?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Yes.

42. ***The AFMC website is hard to understand what can we do about that?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: We will pass it on to AFMC and see what they can do about that.

43. ***How does furlough affect health benefits?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Because of all the possible personal options employees have to choose from, we recommend visiting the myPers website under the Civilian Employee, Benefits and Entitlements section for detailed guidance on health benefits as well as other entitlements at:  
<https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/categories/p/1,2/c/89>

44. ***Can we do half days?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: In accordance with the AFMC/AFGE C214 MOA, bargaining unit employees (BUEs) furlough time will normally be taken in whole days, based on the employee's normal work schedule. Subject to mission needs or requirements, partial furlough days should not occur unless a single partial day is needed to reach the 176 hours total. Employees may request consideration of partial day schedules in discussions with

their supervisors; in general, furlough hours should be taken in whole days. While employees' will have input in scheduling decisions, unit cohesion and the impact to other activities that your unit may support will also come into play. **Update:** 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11.)

**45. Is DoD or OPM working with the State of Florida on the short terms compensation program that is available to employees?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: No. Each state provides unemployment compensation for those who qualify. For Florida, visit: [www.floridajobs.org](http://www.floridajobs.org). In addition, the "Community Services" forum includes budget and credit tips with links to a variety of resources, such as the United Way 211 Hotline for information and referral organizations.

**46. You say supervisors will have flexibility, but to what level of supervision are you talking?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: We are looking at what level is most appropriate; we are going to have to work through that and much of that will be known when we get the proposal replies back and look at what kind of predictable schedule we can arrange and how much cohesion is necessary between element, shop, flight, squadron and group levels.

**47. Is FY14's reduction going to be on the order of 8% and is that better or worse?** (OPR: FOG). Answer: That is probably a good number but there are fenced portions of the budget that make it more difficult to estimate. It depends on how you look at the numbers whether the impact is better or worse.

**48. If one employee takes his 22 days in the first half of the furlough and a second employee takes his 22 days in the second half of the furlough and Congress reaches an agreement and furlough is terminated before the second half, what happens to the first employee, can they recover those days?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: No. The AFMC/AFGE C214 Furlough MOA specifically addresses this scenario and states that employees will not be reimbursed or compensated for the differing impacts if they are allowed to take consecutive days in the first half versus the second. **Update:** 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11.)

**49. What happens to our 4 federal holidays?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: There are three federal holidays during the furlough period (Memorial Day – Monday, July 4th – Thursday, and Labor Day – Monday). The general rule is that an employee is entitled to pay for a holiday so long as he or she is in a pay status on either the workday preceding a holiday or the workday following a holiday. The employee is paid for the holiday based on the presumption that, but for the holiday, the employee would have worked. Update: 28 Mar 13, OSD reduced the number of furlough days to 14. **Update:** 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11. Therefore, there will only be one federal holiday during the furlough period (Labor Day). The latest update can be viewed on myPers at: [https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/15227/p/1,2](https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/15227/p/1,2). [See, Q37, Administrative Furlough Frequently Asked Questions.]

**50. Have we heard any specific guidance about furlough and students? I have a PAC who is TDY to school for 16 weeks (returns late May). If we are furloughed, will the class be extended or because there are military in the same class, will those civilian students be exempt from furlough until after graduation?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: It depends. There are several options for scheduling the furlough, such that the employee and supervisor may agree to serve the furlough all at once. In this instance, the furlough time must begin NLT 14 Jun 13. Otherwise, supervisors, course directors, and instructors should schedule the student's furlough time off to minimize impact in class participation. For example, the furlough hours may

be scheduled for study time or during other school activities that do not impact learning and class participation. During furlough days/hours, the employee will be ordered not to attend the scheduled training or perform coursework. **Update:** The response to this question remains the same. However, as of 22 May 2013 the Civilian Admin Furlough Q & A has been updated. The latest update can be viewed on myPers at: [https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/15227/p/1,2](https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/15227/p/1,2). [See, Q11, Administrative Furlough Frequently Asked Questions.]

**51. Can we get our Congressmen out here to let them know what we think about the furlough and their lack of action?** (OPR: FOG). Answer: As a private citizen you have the ability to communicate with your elected officials to convey how you may feel about the furlough.

**52. What changes on 1 Oct; will this continue?** (OPR: FOG). Answer: Unless altered by law, sequestration continues as a 10-year long step-down process in funding. So there are automatic reductions each fiscal year. The administrative furlough is a decision that OSD made to meet sequestration requirements this fiscal year. It is unknown how the DoD will handle the cuts for the remaining nine years.

**53. I'm a single parent using the Youth Center. With my expected pay cut, will the Youth Center also adjust rates?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: We are working to minimize the impacts and will advise as soon as those outcomes are known. **Update:** The AFMC/AFGE MOA, dated 1 May 13 addresses this question. Locally, the School Age Program (Before & After program) is offering a credit equal to the cost of one day on the parents furlough day; the Youth Center is not. If you are enrolled in the SAP, please see Jennifer or Olla for the form to complete to request the credit. The MOA can be viewed at Eglin Civilian Personnel SharePoint site: <https://org.eis.afmc.af.mil/sites/96abw/96msg/96fss/96FSM/civilianpersonnel/FSMCE%20Employee%20Relations/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

**54. How is my retirement calculation affected by furlough?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Because of all the possible personal variations based on options employees may have it's best to visit the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) website at: <http://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/pay-leave/furlough-guidance/guidance-for-administrative-furloughs.pdf> which provides specific guidance regarding retirement.

**55. Would sequestration go away if Congress got its act together?** (OPR: FOG). Answer: It's theoretically possible. A continuing resolution may help some, depending on the level of funding and the ability to move money from pot to pot, but we do not anticipate a total fix. Update: The President signed a continuing appropriations bill on 26 Mar 13; however it did not eliminate sequestration.

**56. Can we get a copy of your slides or something to negotiate with creditors since it's not our fault, this furlough?** (OPR: FOG/MSG). Answer: Yes. The slides will be posted on the Team Eglin website ([www.eglin.af.mil](http://www.eglin.af.mil)). The AFMC/AFGE C214 MOA states: at the employee's request, management will issue a letter explaining the employee's situation (i.e., furlough, duration, etc.) to any person, corporation, or institution to which the employee is having difficulty meeting a financial obligation because of the furlough.

**57. Most of our RTD&E missions are funded by the program offices and we're fully funded, what is the sense in furloughing us?** (OPR: FOG). Answer: While program offices are still able to fully fund what for us is reimbursable and thus beneficial work, they too will be



impacted in time. While we have 36 employees that were identified as exempted from furlough due to mission critical needs, furloughs is not a pick and choose activity. It is mandated to cut across all appropriations within DoD to help impact the bottom line reduction. Therefore, RTD&E funded civilians are not exempted from furlough. In addition, we cannot use reimbursable RTD&E funds for overtime during the furlough period or to make up the difference in the 64 hour pay period.

**58. *Is there a website that shows the affect of what our sacrifice is having on the entire federal budget; so we can see that this furlough is actually making a difference?*** (OPR: PA). Answer: We know of no such website; however, a quick search of the internet may uncover what you are looking for.

**59. *When are we going to get the nuts and bolts of the MOA?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: the AFMC/AFGE C214 Furlough MOA is now available on Council 214, Team Eglin ([www.eglin.af.mil](http://www.eglin.af.mil)), and Civilian Personnel Section websites. As outlined by the MOA, our task now is to receive inputs from employees to achieve a balance between mission requirements and employee desires. Our ultimate goal is to get to a new battle rhythm and execute the mission under furlough.

**60. *I don't understand how losing leave is going to help the nation's debt? Can't we change the OPM rules?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: OPM rules apply on how you earn leave; this unfortunately is an unintended consequence of furlough.

**61. *Can we use our use or lose leave instead of regular leave?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: No. During an administrative furlough, an employee may not substitute paid leave or other any other form of paid time off to substitute for furlough time.

**62. *Can we work overtime or earn comp time while on furlough?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: No. Overtime and Compensatory Time may not be used to offset the impact of the furlough.

**63. *Who decides which of the temp and term employees are mission critical?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Management assessed each position to determine mission critical impact of temp or term employees. Non-mission critical employees were separated. While mission critical justifications were provided to AFTC/CA for approval.

**64. *Is there some kind of long-term strategic plan for cost saving ideas instead of us just being reactive? Is there some kind of central office?*** (OPR: XP). Answer: There is no central office working a long term strategic plan for cost savings that would impact furlough decision. The decision to furlough was made at the OSD level. Any cost savings we might gain would help with non-pay sequestration cuts (non-pay). Send your ideas through your chain of command.

**65. *When will temps and terms be released?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Some temporary employees were released early. The remainder will serve to their not-to-exceed (NTE) dates, but will not be extended if the position was not deemed mission critical.

**66. *Has there been an official message sent to all the CE customers letting them know what jobs or service will be provided or climate control, fans, heaters, etc?*** (OPR: CEG). Answer: CE Customer Service will put out a mass e-mailing to Facility Managers through the facility manager address group as well as placing a notice placed in the Eglin Daily Bulletin. The message will have information about changes to levels of service and instructions for calling in emergency and urgent work requests. This will be done prior to start of furloughs.

**67. How will civilian after hours alarm responses be handled?** (OPR: MSG/CEG). Answer: During the furlough, civilian employees are not subject to on-call, call-back, or standby unless management requires them to respond to an emergency. If it necessary for a civilian to respond to an alarm after normal duty hours or during a non-pay furlough day, he will be compensated. Response to the alarm is being directed by management (e.g., overtime, premium pay, etc.) and necessary to secure property. We have directed a review of facility alarm custodian letters to make sure they include a primary and alternate custodian; and where manning supports, identification of a military member custodian to respond during the furlough period.

**68. How many civilians are on Eglin AFB? How much money will be saved on Eglin with the admin furlough?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The Eglin Civilian Personnel Section services approximately 4,600 civilians across Team Eglin. While we do not how much money will be saved at Eglin, BGen Harris did share that furlough accounts for approximately one-ninth of the sequestration bill this fiscal year and is estimated to save approximately \$5 billion across DoD.

**69. What will be the savings to DoD of the furlough?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The Commander shared that furlough accounts for approximately one-ninth of the sequestration bill this fiscal year and is estimated to save approximately \$5 billion across DoD.

**70. Do we have to take furlough days when we're TDY if we're in a two-week TDY? Or can we make up those days later in the pay period?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Supervisors and employees will discuss furlough scheduling to determine the best balance between mission requirements and employee preferences. There are four options in the AFMC/AFGE C214 Furlough MOA for scheduling furlough days. Your servicing Employee Relations Specialist can assist with specific situations.

**71. Is it possible furloughs could be ended early? Or is it a final decision once furloughs have started?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Yes, anything is possible. Update: 28 Mar 13, OSD reduced the number of furlough days to 14. Update: 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11.)

**72. I don't think our supervisors are knowledgeable enough to make these decisions and or the commander?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The 96<sup>th</sup> Test Wing Commander holds his subordinate supervisors and commanders accountable for their assigned responsibilities. Information on the furlough has been widely communicated and posted on public websites, which allows for supervisors and employees both to research the guidance. In addition, both can contact the servicing Employee Relations Specialists for specific concerns. Bargaining Unit Employees may also contact their union representative.

**73. Will the work week be 32 hours and anything after that overtime?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Employees will not work in excess of 32 hours per week for those on regular schedules or a compressed work schedule, (i.e., 5-4-9) or 64 hours per pay period for employees who work a Flexible Work Schedule (i.e., who earn credit hours). Work schedules for part-time employees will be pro-rated.

**74. What are the rules/process for getting a part time job off base?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: In general, employees submit AF Form 3902 to their first-level supervisor for approval. Employees are not prohibited from seeking additional employment provided it doesn't violate ethics rules or impact the mission of the AF. Off-duty employment is covered by AFMCI 51-201, posted on the Civilian Personnel SharePoint

site:

<https://org.eis.afmc.af.mil/sites/96abw/96msg/96fss/96FSM/civilianpersonnel/FSMCE%20Employee%20Relations/Forms/AllItems.aspx>.

**75. It may be by group, but please do not let groups have all civilian employees start the day at 0500hrs; I heard the core hours will be 0500-1400 hrs. Child care among other problems will be a hardship for civilian employees.** (OPR: FOG). Answer: There has been no decision as to core hours. We will look at all of the factors and hardships identified by employees before any decision is made. **Update:** On 28 Mar 13 we received approval from OSD to except some CDC employees from the furlough.

**76. What kind of pressure will be put on employees to do 40 hours in 32 hours; same amount of work in 32-hour week?** (OPR: FOG). Answer: We will have to adjust expectations and throughput based on available resources. We will not compromise safety and health of the workforce to meet goals based on a different set of resources.

**77. Will leave be minimized during furlough? Can we take annual leave during the furlough period?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The process for taking annual leave does not change. Employees will request leave and supervisors will assess and approve based on mission requirements. If your leave includes furlough time/day(s), the furlough takes precedence and you will not be paid for the furlough time/day(s).

**78. There are 36 exempt employees, who are they?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: 32 medical positions and 4 deployed to combat zones. Update: Air Force has now exempted CDC workers bringing our new total of exempt employees to 120. **Update:** Air Force has now excepted additional positions such as Foreign Military Sales and Sexual Assault Response Coordinators bringing the new total of exceptions for Team Eglin to 242.

**79. Why are we still hiring and bringing personnel on board when there is a hiring freeze?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The Air Force is currently under a hiring freeze for FY 2013. Internal movements (change to lower grade, reassignment, and promotion) are permissible. Where there is a mission critical requirement, AFTC/CA may approve an exception to allow recruitment to external appointment sources. New employees will be subject to the furlough unless hired into an excepted position.

**80. Once notification is received, bargaining union employees can contact the Union, what about non-bargaining employees, who do they contact?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Non-bargaining unit employees should contact their first-level supervisor.

**81. If we pick-up part time employment, will the AF continue to work with us after furlough?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Off-duty employment must be approved by your supervisor in advance—regardless of furlough. Furlough will have no impact, other than waiving the 2-week notice requirement to obtain approval before starting another job. See Question 74 for additional information.

**82. What is the MDG plan, will it be harder to get appointments?** (OPR: MDG). Answer: Once the individual duty section furlough schedules have been determined, the 96th Medical Group will assess the impact on patient care services and then notify staff and patients of the impact.

**83. My position is funded by the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Forces Group, but I'm an AF employee. How**

***will my position be handled if the Army chooses to not fund my position? In addition, it turns out my position is an overhire, how does this affect me?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: All employees who are not excepted are subject to furlough, regardless of funding source. The fact that you are on an overhire position (i.e., not on a valid manpower authorization) is not a factor in furlough.

***84. Could the Youth/CDC Centers waive the paying for 5 day fees if we are going to be out once a week?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Currently looking at possible options for fees at the Youth Center and CDC. **Update:** Locally, the School Age Program (Before & After program) is offering a credit equal to the cost of one day on the parents furlough day; the Youth Center is not. If you are enrolled in the SAP, please see Jennifer or Olla for the form to complete to request the credit.

***85. Suggestion. Give credit to all affected by noting they endured the sequestration in their personnel records. I envision just adding the word "sequestration" to the place where awards are listed. Almost like a campaign ribbon for civilians. This would not cost much but it would acknowledge that employees haven't "broken faith" despite the situation. Maybe "Sequestration Survivors" could get 1 point towards future promotions"*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The Air Force values the civilian workforce and their hard work and dedication.

***86. There were people hired for places like the Cath Lab that is on hold. Will they now lose their jobs?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The AF is under a hiring freeze for FY13. Some jobs were already in the "fill" pipeline when the freeze was implemented. In general, these require an external hiring freeze exception from AFTC/CA; a delay in start date until FY14; or may have the job offer withdrawn. The supervisor may contact the Civilian Personnel Section (96 FSS/FSMC) for questions on specific positions.

***87. To your knowledge is anyone in Congress working a solution?*** (OPR: FOG). Answer: Government officials continue to meet about sequestration and more immediately a continuing resolution which will provide some relief, however we do not anticipate a total fix. Update: On 26 Mar 13, the President signed a continuing appropriations bill which keeps the government running for the remainder of the FY. Both the Senate and the House have passed FY14 budgets but they differ significantly. Debates between the Senate and the House are expected to continue when Congress returns to session after the Easter and Passover break.

***88. What are my legal right concerning mortgage payments should I fall behind? Do I have protection from foreclosure?*** (OPR: JA). Answer: Outside of foreclosure protections already in place, (e.g., SCRA; Mortgage Forgiveness Debt Relief Act of 2013), there are no special protections for furloughed government employees. Furloughed employees should contact their individual lenders for case-specific guidance.

***89. Why are salaries covered by reimbursable funds affected and what happens to those funds? Also 3600 funds, etc.*** (OPR: MSG / OCR: CPTS). Answer: Under the current guidance from DoD, there are very limited exceptions to furlough. Any reimbursable dollars not earned for any reason are returned to customer. 3600 Funds were also reduced under sequestration.

***90. How will furlough (KE hours) be tracked from pay period to pay period? For example, how can we ensure coding is being properly inputted so that 176 hours is coded for each employee?*** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The Defense Finance and Accounting System (DFAS) will

track the number of furlough hours each pay period for employees. Your servicing Employee Relations Specialist can provide supervisors with information on how to obtain this information. Update: 28 Mar 13, OSD reduced the number of furlough days to 14. **Update:** 14 May 13, SECDEF reduced the number of furlough days to 11.)

**91. How does the furlough affect mission critical TDY's? Are we restricted to 8 hour days while TDY or 64 hours a pay period while TDY?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: There are several options for scheduling the furlough, which may allow for the employee and supervisor to agree that the furlough time will be served all at once. In this instance, the furlough time must begin NLT 14 Jun 13. Otherwise, the employee will be ordered not to perform the temporary duty (e.g., class, meeting, etc.) during those furlough days/hours. More information on this topic is at [https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af//USAF/AFP40/d/sA4057E1F3CE4E6AB013D02ED7E4902B1/FAQs\\_5Mar13.pdf](https://www.my.af.mil/gcss-af//USAF/AFP40/d/sA4057E1F3CE4E6AB013D02ED7E4902B1/FAQs_5Mar13.pdf) [See, Q11, Civilian Admin Furlough Q & As, 22 May 13]. **Update:** 14 May 13, SECDEF directed furlough time begin 8 Jul.)

**92. Why is Eglin expending man-hours supporting utilities privatization during a time of man-hour cuts?** (OPR: CEG). Answer: Utility Privatization (UP) was enabled by Congress via Title 10 U.S.C. 2688(a) and mandated by OSD. Eglin started UP several years ago. The RFP was issued on 27 Sep 12 and estimated award is Sep 14. Bids must be technically awardable and subject matter experts are required to perform technical evaluations ensuring accuracy and verifying the cost is less than government ownership. This is part of source selection which is a critical path in the schedule to ensure we meet the Sep 14 award date.

**93. Since our shop vehicle was taken, we have to borrow a vehicle to go to necessary work. We still have to get to the work. How does this save money?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: To the maximum extent possible, Government-furnished vehicles critical to mission accomplishment will remain in use. The goal is to reduce the number of non-essential vehicles in operation, not to cease all operations of government vehicles. This will be accomplished by pro rata parking and resource pooling. For example, if a unit normally uses the 10 vehicles assigned to it but the mission can be accomplished with 6 by scheduling tasks differently, then the other 4 will be parked. Additionally, if intermittent or extra vehicle use is necessary, that requirement will be met using vehicles still in operation by coordinating between organizations rather than bringing a parked vehicle back into operation. Your supervisor can advise you on options available to ensure mission is accomplished. This is also a method of cost-avoidance, a vehicle parked delays maintenance and repair costs to focus remaining O&M funds on fewer vehicles in service.

**94. What about non-AFMC personnel serviced by TW personnel and subject to council 214 agreements? What about tenants?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: All civilians serviced by the Eglin Civilian Personnel Section (96 FSS/FSMC), regardless of MAJCOM, are covered by the AFMC/AFGE Council 214 MOA furlough implementation guidance.

**95. Since the sequestration may continue on in FY14, do you have a plan to share the civilian's burden with the contractors? Contractors in the Science and Engineer field make more money than their civilian counterparts. We can save more by reducing their salary. It is not fair to punish the civilians with pay freeze and furlough.** (OPR: AFTC/PZ). Answer: Contracts and contractors will be affected by sequestration. There are several factors that are influencing how these budget cuts are being implemented including the impact to government contracts and contractors. Until other budget decisions potentially impacting this situation are implemented, the necessary courses of action and the impact to government



contracts are unknown. We are continually reviewing all contract requirements, working with our contractors to implement cost cutting measures and will continue look for ways to reduce costs in all areas.

**96. Are all MAJCOMs going to work uniformly regarding the furlough; i.e., when we work the 32 hour weeks where each individual has one furlough day a week and then turn around and authorize comp time/overtime. Is there going to be standardization throughout the Air Force?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: The AF has provided guidance, which applies to all MAJCOMs. That said, the guidance does contain flexibilities to allow Commanders to manage their respective mission. As stated in Q94 above, all bargaining unit civilians serviced by the Eglin Civilian Personnel Section regardless of MAJCOM, are covered by the AFMC/AFGE Council 214 MOA furlough implementation guidance.

**97. As devoted AF federal employees we face difficult times ahead while still ensuring the mission is still met. Considering the 20% financial cut we are facing, everything little thing we can do will help us through the troubling times. Is it possible to use the Commissary, BX and gas stations?** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Unknown at this time. No information has been received on whether or not AAFES or DeCA facilities will be opened for unauthorized personnel.

**98. We have two civilians at AWC - technically TDY from Eglin to attend school. I believe the TDY is centrally funded by AFPC, but they are still technically under Eglin. Do you have insight into whether they will be sequestered? The school asked them, and they didn't know how to answer.** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Employees participating in short-term or long-term training are subject to furlough unless specifically excepted. In the event that scheduled training occurs during a furlough period, affected employees must be placed in a furlough status and ordered not to attend the scheduled training or perform course work during the hours/days they are on furlough. Supervisors, course directors and instructors should schedule each student's furlough time off to minimize impact to class participation. For example, a student in short-term training may choose to re-schedule a furlough day earlier or later in the pay period to attend a five day course without interruption. A student in long-term training might be furloughed during hours normally designated as study time or other school activities that will not affect learning and program participation during the week. But employees may not perform work of benefit to the Air Force during the hours/days that they are on furlough.

**99. Some of our employees are wanting to know if the within grade increases are going to be affected by the furlough. As an example, my next step comes before this ends.** (OPR: MSG). Answer: Extended periods of non-pay status, such as furlough, may affect the timing of such increases. For example, a GS employee in steps 1, 2, or 3 of the grade who is furloughed an aggregate of more than 2 workweeks during the waiting period would have his or her within-grade increase delayed by at least a full pay period. More information on this topic is at: [https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a\\_id/15227/p/1,2.pdf](https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/answers/detail/a_id/15227/p/1,2.pdf) [See, Q22, Civilian Admin Furlough Q & As, 22 May 13]

**100. Would you consider telling the active duty not to make furlough jokes? Our suffering may bring us together, but for those who are not suffering to make light of ours is hurtful.** (OPR: FOG). Answer: Absolutely—it is entirely inappropriate and I will emphasize that to the entire leadership team.

**101. I am looking for clarification on the use of the Shared Work Act/Short Time Compensation program for furloughed workers. From what I can see the program should be available for federal workers in FL and any furloughed worker should meet the**

**eligibility requirements. Can we get a response on whether this option will be pursued, and if not, why? Thanks!** (OPR: MSG: OCR: JA) Answer: The Florida STC Program for employers was contacted; it could not apply to our federal workforce because the employer/agency applying for the STC program would ultimately pay 100% of each employee's short term compensation, which defeat the purpose of a furlough imposed by DoD. Consistent with DoD, the Air Force does not plan to apply for shared work programs due to potential for conflicts of interest, legal and security issues with Federal employees.

**102. I am concerned the furlough could create financial strain or hardship that may in turn impact my security clearance. Can you provide any guidance?** (OPR: IP). Answer: Federal Adjudicative guidelines consider circumstances leading to financial problem and employee attempt to take responsibility. Should you encounter furlough-related financial problems work with your creditors to maintain debt in a responsibility manner; keep documentation of your financial situation and communicate with your creditors; and keep your unit personnel security manager informed (2-8565/3-1044/2-5294) of any emerging financial problems.

**103. Can an employee who has a 9 hour day take 8 hours of furlough and 1 hour of annual leave?** (OPR: MSG) Answer: Yes, the employee may request and the supervisor may choose to approve 1 hour of annual leave.

**104. How will the furlough affect the 3 hours of fitness per week?** (OPR: MSG) Answer: Rules governing the Civilian Fitness and Wellness Policy remain in effect; however, employees should expect furlough impacts. Supervisors are still the decision authority to grant fitness time and may modify employee's schedules to balance with mission needs.

**105. Am I allowed to take my 11 furlough days while on LWOP?** (OPR: MSG) Answer: Yes, employees who are in a LWOP status during the administration furlough (8 July – 21 September) will receive credit for their time in that status towards any remaining scheduled furlough hours. LWOP taken prior to or after the administrative furlough will not be credited toward required furlough time. During an administrative furlough, employees issued furlough notices will be subject to furlough time until an approved period of LWOP begins. Supervisors are responsible for certifying time and attendance records, and tracking the number of LWOP hours credited for furlough hours. Additional information regarding this as well as other furlough related questions can be found at the myPers website which is located at: <https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/landing>. Once the website is opened you will find the FAQs listed under the "Most Viewed Articles" section. [See Q30, Administrative Furlough Frequently Asked Questions.]

**106. May an employee earn credit hours during the furlough?** (OPR: MSG) Answer: Consistent with A1 FM Memo, dated 10 May 13, managers may approve credit hours if used in the same period so that employees are not working above and beyond normal duty hours. Additional information regarding this as well as other furlough related questions can be found at the myPers website which is located at: <https://gum-crm.csd.disa.mil/app/landing>. Once the website is opened you will find the FAQs listed under the "Most Viewed Articles" section. [See Q10b. Administrative Furlough Frequently Asked Questions.]

**107. If I take all of my furlough days at the beginning of the furlough period will I be permitted to substitute annual leave retroactively?** (OPR: MSG) Answer: No. Currently the AF has not authorized to retroactively substitute administrative or annual leave for furlough

days in excess of the hours served.